

2. REMARKS

2.1 NATIONALIZATION

This application represents the U.S. national stage of International Patent Application PCT/US2003/041249, filed December 24, 2003, which claims priority to first U.S. provisional application Serial No. 60/436,270, filed December 24, 2002, and to second U.S. provisional application Serial No. 60/456,774, filed March 21, 2003.

A copy of the International Application as filed is not required to satisfy 35 U.S.C. § 371(c)(2) as the application was filed in the United States Receiving Office. Nonetheless, for the Examiner's convenience, a copy of international application PCT/US2003/041249 is enclosed.

2.2 STATUS OF THE CLAIMS

After according a U.S. filing date, and before calculating the filing fee, entry of the foregoing claim amendments is respectfully requested. These revisions are made to conform the claims to U.S. practice, and to even more clearly define the claimed invention. This voluntary amendment is submitted in an effort to reduce excess claims fees, and to expedite examination and allowance of claims directed to particular embodiments of the invention. Applicants expressly reserve the right to re-file claims directed to the subject matter of the claims cancelled herein in an appropriate continuing or divisional application.

Claims 1-58 were present in the original PCT application as filed.

Claims 8, 15, 19-21, 24-35, 37-45, and 47-58 have been canceled herein without prejudice and without disclaimer. Applicants expressly reserve the right to re-file these claims, or claims directed to the subject matter of these claims, at a later stage in prosecution, or in a

divisional or other continuing application based upon the present application at any time during its pendency.

Claims 7 and 14 have been amended herein.

No claims have been added.

Claims 1-7, 9-14, 16-18, 22-23, 36, and 46 are now pending in the case and ready for initial examination on the merits.

The present claims are fully supported by the specification and claims of the original international application and do not, in any way, contain new matter.

2.3 FORMALITIES AND SUMMARY

The national filing fee and claim fees are included herewith. Any omitted fees should be deducted from Williams, Morgan & Amerson Deposit Account No. 50-0786/4003.003500.

Should the Office have any questions or comments, a telephone call to the Applicants' undersigned representative would be appreciated.

Respectfully submitted,

WILLIAMS, MORGAN & AMERSON
CUSTOMER NO. 23720

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Mark D. Moore, Ph.D.
Reg. No. 42,903
10333 Richmond, Suite 1100
Houston, Texas 77042
(713) 934-4084
(713) 934-7011 (facsimile)

AGENT FOR APPLICANTS